

POLS 3600: Criminal Justice Administration

Dr. Karson P. Ray

University of Georgia, Fall 2025

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Office: Baldwin Hall 305A

Class Hours: T/Th 9:35 am – 10:50 am

Classroom: Baldwin Hall 102

Course Description

Criminal Justice Administration provides an overview of the institution, actors, and agencies involved in the administration of criminal justice in the United States. Topics surveyed include the criminal justice system, police, arrest, bail, prosecution, plea bargaining, trials, conviction, sentencing, corrections, probation, and reentry.

Required Materials

- *A Time for Mercy* by John Grisham (available on Amazon or at most local bookstores).
- *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham. This work can be either read (available on Amazon or at most local bookstores) OR watched as a film. I recommend reading the book for the best experience, but the film is excellent as well.
- All other readings will be available on ELC weekly.

Course Objectives

1. Students will examine the relevant institutions and actors involved with the various stages of the criminal justice system, including consideration of law enforcement, courts, and corrections.
2. Students will review the legal, political, and social dynamics of the criminal justice system.
3. Students will attain an ability to critically analyze criminal justice system practices and procedures.
4. Students will attain an ability to discuss criminal justice policy issues in a disciplined and cogent manner.

Course Structure

Class Structure

This course is designed to prepare you for a future in law school, graduate school, or the workforce in the field of criminal justice. The abundance and intensity of readings is meant to challenge you; I do not expect you to have a full and complete understanding of the readings before class. What I do expect is for you to come to class with questions, and to leave with a more complete knowledge of these different aspects of the U.S. criminal justice system.

Grades

- **Exams** will be administered three times during the semester. These exams will be comprised of multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer (2-3 sentences), and essay questions. You will have the entirety of the class to take the first two exams (1 hour and 15 minutes). Exams will not be cumulative. Exams 1 and 2 will each count for 25% of your final grade. Exam 3 (final exam) will be administered during the final exam period; for our purposes, this means it will take place on December 9th from 8:00 am to 11:00 a.m. Exam 3 will count for 10% of your grade. The dates of each exam are listed in the schedule, but are subject to change dependent upon our pace throughout the semester. **Makeup exams are only permitted in extraordinary circumstances such as documented medical emergencies. Makeup exams will not be offered without documentation and as much advance notice as possible, depending on the circumstances.**
- A **Simulation** will allow you an opportunity to observe the difficulties associated with sentencing. This event will take place at the beginning of November and will last two weeks in total. 10% of your grade will be your participation in the event and 5% will be the completion of research due at the start of the event. More details will be shared during class.
- Two **Quizzes** will be administered through ELC during our class meeting time. Each quiz is worth 5% of your final grade.
- **Attendance** will be taken every day (excluding exam days and simulation week) throughout the semester, and participation in class discussion will count as bonus points toward this grade. Some days, attendance will be taken by brief in-class assignments. Attendance will count for 10% of your grade. I will accept **two unexcused absences**. For each unexcused absence following, one point will be deducted from your attendance grade (a 10% reduction). I will accept documented excuses up to 7 days following the missed class period.
- **Analysis** for your assigned reading of *A Time For Mercy* will count for 5% of your final grade. More details on the nature of this assignment will be available towards the end of the semester. You will be expected to view or read *A Time to Kill* on your own prior to the week in which we analyze *A Time for Mercy*, for comparative purposes.

Grading Summary

I reserve the right to curve the scale dependent on overall class scores at the end of the semester. Your final grade will count these assessments using the following proportions:

- 60% of your grade will be determined by 3 in-class exams. Exams 1 and 2 will each count for 25% and Exam 3 (final exam) will count for 10%.
- 15% of your grade will be the "Simulation." This will be graded on your individual effort for 10% and your research leading up to the event for 5%.
- 10% of your grade will be Quizzes. Each quiz is worth 5%.
- 10% of your grade will be determined by attendance.
- 5% of your grade will be based on your *A Time For Mercy* analysis.

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	88-89
B	84-87
B-	80-83
C+	78-79
C	74-77
C-	70-73
D+	68-69
D	64-67
D-	60-63
F	< 60

Class Policies

During Class

I absolutely understand that using laptops to record notes is important, so computers will be allowed in my classroom as long as the use of these devices does not disturb the learning capability of other students. If laptops are discovered to be used for any other purpose than academics pertaining to this course, then the privilege of electronic devices will be taken away. I aim to respectfully allow each student the same learning capability, which could be hindered by the use of electronic devices. Phones will not be allowed during class time, except in case of emergency. Eating and drinking are permitted, so long as we can respect our classroom and allow for regular class to be conducted.

Attendance Policy

Attendance will be taken every day and this will account for 10% of your grade. You will be allowed two unexcused absences. Following two unexcused absences, further unexcused absences will result in a one point attendance deduction per absence. Excused absences will include those with legitimate documentation, which can be sent to my email up to 7 days after the absence.

Policies on Incomplete Grades and Late Assignments

I will accept incomplete or late assignments when a legitimate excuse is provided. This requires documentation, and notice as soon as possible. I am flexible, and understanding, but I must be aware of your circumstances to be able to accept incomplete or late work. Incomplete work without an excuse will be graded as such, and late work without an excuse is subject to a 10% reduction in overall grade for every business day after the deadline.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

Please see UGA's extensive policies on academic honesty (<http://honesty.uga.edu>). Be aware that under no circumstances will cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty be tolerated in this class. UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at honesty.uga.edu.

Please note that in my class, the use of unauthorized devices on in-class exams will result in an automatic report to UGA's Office of Academic Honesty and severe grade penalties. Should you need to have access to your phone for emergency purposes during an examination, you must speak with me **before** the assessment takes place.

Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

To ensure you develop and master the foundational knowledge and skills in this course, the use of generative AI (GAI) tools is strictly prohibited. This includes all stages of your work process, even the preliminary ones. This prohibition extends to AI writing tools like Grammarly and Wordtune, as well as GAI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, Writesonic, Rytr, and Rytutor. If you are uncertain about using a particular tool to support your work, please consult with me before using it.

Mental Health and Wellness at UGA

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community. Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity. UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Disability Resource Center and Testing Services: drc.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>.

Disability Accommodations

If you anticipate needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, you must register for services with the Accessibility and Testing Center (A&T), formerly the Disability Resource Center (DRC). I will accommodate requests from A&T in this course. Additional information can be found here: <https://accessibility.uga.edu>

Prohibition on Class Recordings and Distribution of Course Materials

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

For more information on securing an accommodation to record lectures, see: <https://accessibility.uga.edu/faculty-guidelines-for-record-lecture/>.

Schedule

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The schedule is tentative and subject to change, though I commit to giving you plenty of advance notice if anything changes. The learning goals expressed in the syllabus above should be viewed as the key concepts you should grasp after each week.

(Week 1) 8/14: Introduction to Criminal Justice

- "Intro to CJ readings.pdf"

(Week 2) 8/19 and 8/21: Types of Crime

- "Crime, Crime Types, Data Reading.pdf"

(Week 3) 8/26 and 8/28: Criminal Law and Procedure

- "Criminal Law and Procedure Readings.pdf"

(Week 4) 9/2 and 9/4: Introduction to Police, Policing Issues

- "Intro to Policing Readings.pdf"
- "Policing Issues Readings.pdf"
- Optional: "NYT-Thin Blue Line Getting Thinner-6-12-22.pdf"
- Optional: "NYT-Uvalde Families Police Accountability 6-5-22.pdf"
- QUIZ 1 ON 9/4. Quiz 1 will be open on ELC from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

(Week 5) 9/9 and 9/11: Police Diversity, Police and Law

- "Policing Diversity and Representation Readings.pdf"
- "Body camera policy-July 2022 article.pdf"
- "Race, Place, and Effective Policing"
- "police and law readings.pdf"

(Week 6) 9/16 and 9/18: Exam 1

- Exam 1 on 9/18, in-person, during class.

(Week 7) 9/23 and 9/25: Judges, Courts and Adjudication

- "Judges, Courts, and Adjudication Readings.pdf"

(Week 8) 9/30 and 10/2: Pre-Trial, Bail & Plea Bargaining, Trial

- "Pre-trial and Bail Readings.pdf"
- "plea bargaining and trials readings.pdf"

(Week 9) 10/7 and 10/9: Quiz 2 and Guest Speaker

- QUIZ 2 ON 10/7. Quiz 2 will be open on ELC from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.
- Guest Speaker in class on 10/9. Attendance will be taken.

(Week 10) 10/14 and 10/16: Punishment, Sentencing

- "Sentencing and Punishment Readings.pdf"

(Week 11) 10/21 and 10/23: Wrongful Convictions, Corrections

- "Wrongful convictions readings.pdf"
- "Corrections and Prisons Readings.pdf"

(Week 12) 10/28 and 10/30: Exam 2 and Simulation Preparation

- Exam 2 on 10/30, in-person, during class.

(Weeks 13 and 14) 11/4 through 11/13: Simulation

- Pre-simulation research due on 11/4 at start of class.

(Week 15) 11/18 and 11/20: Incarceration/Prison Society, Probation/Reentry

- "Probation, Intermediate, and Reentry Readings.pdf"
- *A Time For Mercy* should be read by November 18th and you should have read or viewed *A Time to Kill* by this date as well.

(Week 16) 11/25: *A Time For Mercy* Analysis and Final Exam Preparation

Withdrawal deadline is November 12.

Friday class schedule in effect on December 2 (no class meeting for us).

Reading Day is December 3.

Final exam period is December 4-10.

FINAL EXAM is December 9 from 8:00 am to 11:00 am.